



Region One
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

NORTH SHORE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
PROPOSED WILDLIFE VIEWING AREA
DECISION NOTICE
JUNE 20, 2019

Description of the Proposed Action

The North Shore area southeast of Kalispell is a designated Important Bird Area (IBA) by the Audubon Society. The IBA serves as critical stopover habitat for migratory birds and nesting habitat for spring and summer breeding birds. The diversity of birds is extraordinary with birders having observed more than 220 bird species.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposed to create a wildlife viewing area that meets the grade and dimensional standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The viewing area would help accommodate the increasing demands for safe and easily accessible wildlife viewing opportunities in the Kalispell area.

FWP proposes to accept Alternative B, the proposed action of the North Shore Wildlife Management Area Proposed Wildlife Viewing Area draft environmental assessment (EA).

Public Involvement

The North Shore Wildlife Management Area Proposed Wildlife Viewing Area draft EA was released for a 14-day public comment period on May 30, 2019. FWP posted a public notice on its webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov> and the Region One Facebook page. A news release was prepared and distributed to a standard list of media outlets interested in FWP Region One issues, and the draft EA was available at FWP Region One Headquarters in Kalispell and the FWP State Headquarters in Helena. Additionally, public notices were placed in the *Daily Inter Lake*, the *Flathead Beacon*, and the *Helena Independent Record*. Notice of this EA was also distributed on cards to neighboring landowners to ensure their knowledge of the proposed action.

Summary of Public Responses

FWP received 3 responses to the draft EA. All responses were positive and supported the proposed action. One response offered suggestions to mitigate wildlife disturbance.

FWP Responses to Public Comments

- **Fencing and Vegetative Screening:** One letter suggested that fencing or low vegetative screening be put in place to mitigate disturbance.

FWP Response: FWP agrees that fencing and some vegetative screening would help mitigate potential disturbance and included building fences and planting shrubs to screen the viewing area from wildlife in its proposed actions on page 5 of the draft EA.

FWP Final Decision

In reviewing all the public comments and other relevant information, and evaluating the environmental effects, I hereby approve Alternative B, the proposed action of the North Shore Wildlife Management Area Proposed Wildlife Viewing Area draft EA.

Through the public review process described above, FWP found no significant impacts associated with the proposed action. Noting and including the responses to public comments, FWP believes the completion of this project will help accommodate the increasing demands for safe and easily accessible wildlife viewing opportunities for all ages, in the Kalispell area and allow FWP to foster interest and involvement in the resources we manage.



Jim Williams
Regional Supervisor

6/20/19
Date